WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Corruption and Favourtism in Employment Exchanges

*65. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of rampant corruption and favouritism in almost all the Employment Exchanges in the country; and

(b) if so, what remedial action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) It is not correct to say that rampant corruption and favouritism prevails at almost all Employment Exchanges in the country. Some complaints about malpractices at Employment Exchanges were received by the Government in the past. These complaints were promptly forwarded to the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations for necessary investigation and appropriate action as the Employment Exchanges function under their administrative control. Central Government have also *inter-alia* issued general guidelines to the State Governments to check malpractices in the Employment Exchanges.

Manufacture of snack foods and Coca Cola by M/s. JMRPCO.

*66. SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the approval given to Ms. JMRPCO Limited for the manufacture of Snack Foods and Coca Cola contains the condition that export import ratio of the project for soft drink concentrate should be 3:1;

(b) whether soft drink concentrate is required to be exported by BRITCO Foods to fulfil the above condition; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) to (c) The foreign collaboration approval granted to M/s. JMRPCO Limited does not contain any export stipulation which has to be implemented statutorily. However, it has been noted on the basis of the offer made by the Company that they are committed to the export import ratio of the project in the case of import of soft drink concentrate at 3:1. It is, however, not necessary for the Company to export soft drink concentrate.

Underweighment of Coal

*67. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Times of India dated the 16th April, 1992 under the heading "Coal Mafia back in Bihar, Bengal; if so, the details in this regard;

(b) whether it is a fact that in March, 1992 alone 25 lakh MTs of steel coal valuing nearly Rs. 250 crores was pilferred;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Railways have permitted coal authorities to test weighment enroute via Railway to verify cover up of initial underweighment at pit heads where Railway officials and colliery officials may prepare false records;

(d) what was the number of complaints of underweighment in coal delivery received during the last year and the claims for compensation;

(e) whether Government have set up any inquiry to investigate the above pilferage; and

(f) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir. The news item mainly deals with alleged short loading of coal and incorrect weighment of railway wagons, pilferage en-route by unsocial elements and consequential losses to the coal consumers.

(b) Government have so far not received any report of pilferage of coal of such

high magnitude from collieries. Presumably the Hon'ble Member is referring to alleged pilferage of direct feed and washed coking coal being supplied by Coal India Ltd. (CIL) to steel plants. The total quantity of such coal supplied to steel plants during March '92 from CIL sources was 7.4 lakh tonnes (provisional). As such the alleged shortage of 25 lakh tonnes is even more than the supplies made.

(c) Coal companies have no facilities for en-route weighment. Such weighment, if any, can be done only by railways.

(d) Coal is sold by coal companies on ex-pithead basis. Coal companies are, therefore, not responsible for any en-route pilferage.

(e) and (f) Do not arise in view of reply to part (d) above.

Cell to monitor the effect of duty concessions on medicines

*68. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 2075 given in Rajya Sabha on the 12th December, 1991 and state:

(a) whether his ministry has any proposal to set up a cell to monitor the effect of duty concessions;

(b) if so, by when;

(c) whether it is a fact that consumer prices of medicines are not reduced and the benefit of duty concession is retained by the producers or their principals abroad in league with some officials;

(d) what is the effect of duty reduction on Cefotaxim Sodium and Ceftazidime, when was the duty reduced and when was the benefit of duty reduction passed on to the consumers; and

(e) what steps have been taken by Government to break the nexus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND PERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) and (b) No Sir, However the strengthening of the present administrative arrangements for handling this work through reorganisation of the existing staff in the Deptt. is under examination.

(c) to (e) The purpose of giving customs duty concessions on intermediates and bulk drugs is to encourage the manufacture of bulk drugs/formulations from more basic stages, as also to ensure the availability of medicines in abundant quantity at reasonable prices to the consumer. The prices of bulk drugs/formulations are fixed in consultation with BICP on the basis of latest duty structure in case of items under price control.

The bulk drugs Ceftazidime and Cefotaxim Sodium were exempted from customs duty w.e.f. July, 1991 and September, 1991 respectively. This exemption was given to encourage the indigenous production of formulations and to save foreign exchange on the import of formulations which has been exempted from customs duty.

Impact of budget on industry

*69. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new budgetary changes, direct and indirect, have helped industry like intermediate consumer durables and certain basic segment of industries to overcome the recession, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the partial free convertibility of rupee has created an industrial growth climate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) The Union Budget 1992-93 announced a number of changes such as the rationalisation and lowering of custom duties, the reform of direct taxes including in particular reduction of tax on productive assets, the introduction of the Liberalised Exchange Rate Management System for market related exchange rate determination, measures for reform in the